

**DETERMINING AVAILABILITY OF PARTICIPANTS FOR
COMPUTER-BASED COMMUNICATION**

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An embodiment of a method of establishing a computer-based communications session involving a user of a computer includes determining the availability of a potential participant in the communications session. According to the determined availability, information may be displayed on a display screen of the computer. An embodiment of a system for computer-based communication includes a display screen, means for determining the availability of a potential participant in a computer-based communications session, and means for, according to the determined availability, displaying information on the display screen. The means for determining availability and means for displaying may include a communications aggregation program stored on a storage medium within the system. A computer-usable carrier medium may include program instructions executable for implementing the method, and/or a data structure including availability information.

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